

Lunar New Year

Customs and Superstitions



Lunar New Year

- At Chinese New Year, many people follow traditional customs and believe in superstitions.



“Red” is a lucky Colour

Red is a lucky colour in Chinese culture. At New Year's, people wear red clothing and have red decorations in their homes.



Children receive “lucky money” in red envelopes on New Year’s Day.



Firecrackers and loud fireworks make lots of noise to scare away bad luck.



People don't buy shoes in the first few days of the New Year.

- “Shoes” is a homophone for the word “xie” meaning “evil” in Chinese.



It's bad luck to wash your hair on New Year's Day or get a haircut during the first few days of the new year.

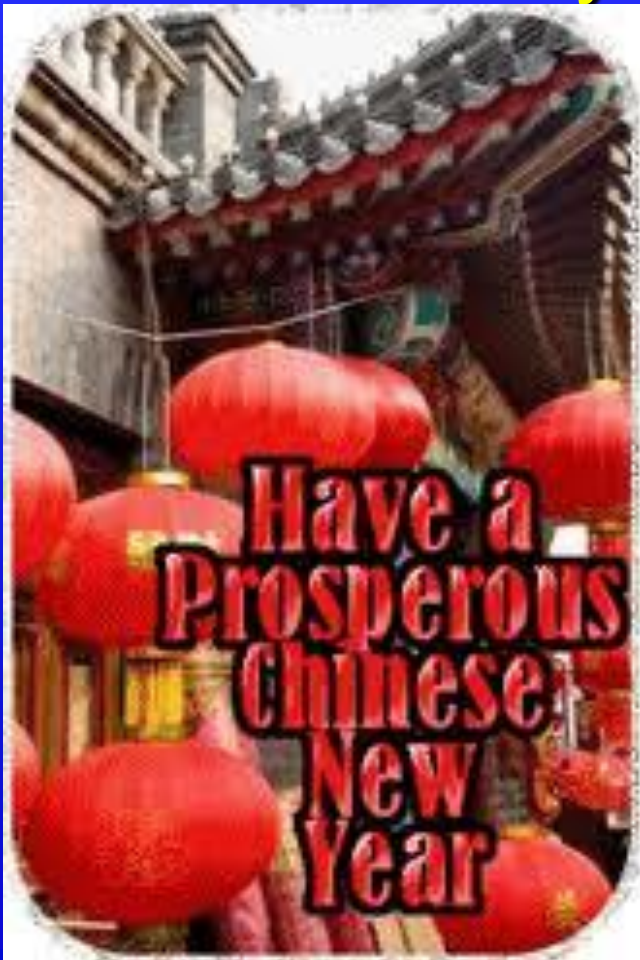
- “Hair” is a homophone for the word “fa” meaning “prosperity” in Chinese. If you cut or wash your hair, you could cut or wash away your prosperity.



It's important to let out the "old year", and welcome the new one. At midnight on New Year's Eve, every window and door is open to let out the old year, and let in the new one.



All people must pay their debts by the New Year, and no one should loan money on New Year's Day either.



At the beginning of the year, everyone must watch their language, and not say bad or unlucky words .



- The number “four” is avoided as the pronunciation sounds like the word for death.
- Death and dying are not talked about. No one tells ghost stories.

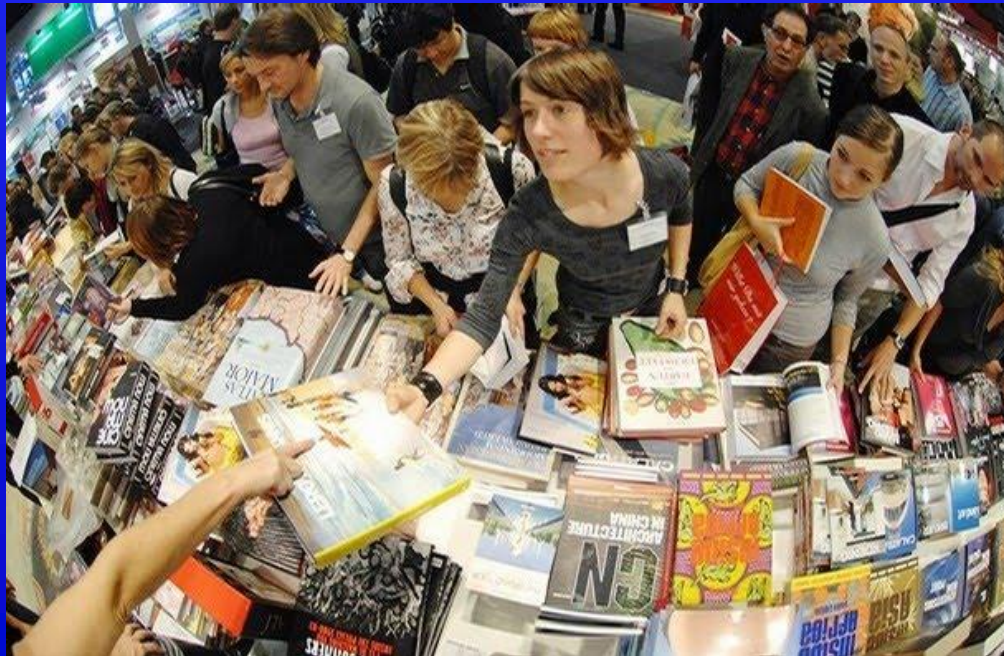


If children cry on New Year's day, they will tend to cry all year. Mother's and father's must be careful not to punish or make their children cry on this day.



It's bad luck to buy books during the first few days of the New Year.

- The word “book” in Chinese is a homophone for the word “shu” meaning “lose”.



It's important to clean house before the New Year.

- If a person cleans their house after the New Year, they may sweep away any good luck received on New Year's day.



Lunar New Year is a very important holiday in many parts of the world. 2012 is the year of the dragon, one of the twelve animals in the zodiac calendar.



The dragon gives success and happiness to all honest people. This is a year that can bring good fortune to many people.

It is said that 2012 is a good year to start something new.



Check your understanding.

01. What colour is a lucky colour in Chinese culture?

02. What do children received from their older relatives?

03. How do firecrackers scare away bad luck?

04. What two things don't people usually buy in the first few days of the New Year?

05. How could you “wash” away all your prosperity?

06. Why would a person open all their doors and windows at New Year's?

07. Why is number four an unlucky number in many Asian cultures?

08. Why might parents have to be careful not to make their children cry?

09. What must people do before New Year's day and not afterwards? Why?

10. What do you know about this year's animal represented in the Lunar calendar?